

The Career Internship Program



USDA
Foreign Agricultural Service

Equal Employment Opportunity Statement

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The Foreign Agricultural Service (FAS) U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) Career Internship Program (CIP)

Program Overview

The USDA's Foreign Agricultural Service (FAS) Career Intern Program (CIP) is designed to prepare exceptional men and women who have professional experiences in agriculture and/or business, a college degree, and competencies for careers in public service with FAS. Interns will participate in a two-year program that is designed to fine-tune their skills and abilities. FAS hires full time employees for marketing and international trade specialist and agricultural and international economist positions through the CIP.

The two-year internship provides the Career Intern an opportunity to learn about the agency as they work in different areas in the Washington, DC offices of FAS: Commodity and Marketing Programs, Export Credits, International Trade Policy, and International Cooperation Development. On-the-job and formal training is provided based on the intern's and agency's needs. In addition, the internship gives the intern time to consider a career in FAS's Civil Service or Foreign Service.

CIP policy

The Federal Career Intern Program was established by Executive Order 13162 on July 10, 2000, to attract men and women to the Federal workforce who have diverse professional experiences, academic training, and competencies, and to prepare them for careers in public service. By drawing individuals with diverse backgrounds, the CIP provides a continuing source of trained men and women to meet the future challenges of public service. To view the CIP rules and regulations, outlining the authority, policies and administration: [Executive Order](#). The [Office of Personnel Management Federal Register Notice](#) defines the Program Policy for the CIP.

The FAS Mission

USDA's Foreign Agricultural Service represents the diverse interests of U.S. agriculture abroad. FAS operates programs designed to build new markets and improve the competitive position of U.S. agriculture in the global marketplace, and to improve food security worldwide. FAS activities focus on:

- Market Development
- Market Intelligence
- Export Financing
- Market Access and Trade Policy
- Food Assistance and Technical Assistance

For more information, visit: www.fas.usda.gov.

Career Internship Program, cont.

Benefits and Performance

Benefits

In addition to a salary, Career Interns earn annual leave and sick leave, are paid for Federal holidays, and are automatically covered under the Federal Employees Retirement System (FERS). Career Interns may elect life insurance, health insurance and thrift savings plan options. Career Interns also enjoy the benefits of eligibility for promotion, flexible work hours, Family Leave, and Family Friendly Programs. For more information about salary and benefits, visit: http://opm.gov/Employment_and_Benefits/index.asp

Performance, Promotion and Permanent Hire

Career Interns must maintain satisfactory performance to remain in the program and to be eligible for promotion during the two years. After a positive evaluation at the end of two years, Career Interns will be eligible to become a permanent employee.

Career Interns will not be required to serve a probationary (trial) period following their conversion to the competitive service; the two years spent as a Career Intern will satisfy the Federal employment probationary period requirement.

FAS' Foreign Service

After conversion to a career employee, Career Interns may apply to FAS' Foreign Service.

The Selection Process

How Career Interns are selected

The Human Resources Division (HRD) and the FAS Recruitment Committee review applications four times a year. HRD ensures that the applications are complete and that applicants meet the basic eligibility criteria, as outlined below. The Recruitment Committee ranks all applicants and interviews the top candidates.

Candidates selected by the committee will be placed on a roster. Candidates not selected for the roster will be notified by mail. FAS supervisors who have an available position will interview and choose from the candidates on the roster. Please note that being selected as a Career Intern Candidate makes the candidate eligible for a Career Intern appointment at FAS, but it does not guarantee the candidate a position.

Career Internship Program, cont.

The candidate's name will remain on the roster for one year. If selected from the roster by an FAS supervisor, the candidate will be offered a two-year CIP internship. If the candidate is not chosen during that year, the candidate's application will need to be resubmitted to begin the process again. Candidates not chosen for the roster may re-apply.

Basic Eligibility Criteria

- U.S. Citizen.
- A GPA minimum of 3.00.
- Degree – a Bachelor's, Master's or PhD degree.
- Relevant Coursework – Candidates for agricultural and international economist positions are required to have 21 hours of economics and 3 credit hours of calculus, accounting or statistics.

Core Qualifications

- Leadership Skills and/or Experience.
- Cultural Experiences Abroad or in the U.S., working with diversity.
- Teamwork Skills and/or Experience.
- Technical Skills – Windows software applications and knowledge of using the Internet.
- Written Communication – the candidate may be asked to write an essay as part of the interview.
- Ability to travel domestically and/or abroad, as required by position.

Useful, but not required, skills and/or work experience include:

- Agricultural background and trade policy, business, marketing, and development experience.
- Foreign Language Ability.
- Adaptability and Flexibility.
- Initiative, Innovation, Risk Taking and Problem Solving.
- Conflict Management.
- Strategy Development and Implementation.
- Program Monitoring and Evaluation.
- Human Resource Management.
- Financial Management.
- Public Speaking Skills.
- Influencing and Negotiating.

Career Internship Program, cont.

Preference given to honorably discharged veterans

Career Intern candidates who have served on active duty in the U.S. military, may be eligible for veterans' preference. Veterans' preference requirements may be obtained from the contact person listed in this brochure.

Equal Opportunity Employer

In accordance with the Federal Equal Opportunity Recruitment Program, the Department encourages women and minority students with an interest in international agriculture affairs to apply for these positions.

The Federal government is an equal opportunity employer. Hiring and advancement are based on qualifications and performance, regardless of the candidate's race, color, national origin, gender, religion, age, disability, political beliefs, sexual orientation, and marital or family status race.

The Application Package

The application must consist of the following:

- OF-612, Optional Application for Federal Employment or a resume that contains the same information. For a copy: www.opm.gov/Forms/.
- AD-2028 USDA Career Internship Application. For a copy: <http://www.usda.gov/da/employ/CareerInternApplication.htm>.
- Letter of Recommendation from a Professor or Supervisor.
- Official Transcripts of Graduate AND Undergraduate Degree Programs.
- Computer Skills List.
- Contact Information for current or previous supervisors or professors for reference purposes.

Typed forms are strongly recommended. Applicants unable to submit typed forms should use black ink.

Acknowledgement of Application

Upon receipt of the candidate's application, a letter of acknowledgement will be mailed to the candidate.

Career Internship Program, cont.

Submission of Applications

A completed application package, including all attachments, must be postmarked, faxed or hand delivered. Applications are accepted year round.

All applications must be submitted to:

Dawn Ferguson
USDA/FSA/HRD/FOB
AgStop 0593
1400 Independence Avenue, SW
Washington, DC 20250-0593

Contact Information:

Dawn Ferguson
Phone: 202-418-8958
Email: Dawn.Ferguson@usda.gov

Submission Deadlines

Applications will be evaluated four times per year. The application deadlines are September 15 and June 15.

For more information

Please visit our Website at <http://www.fas.usda.gov/admin/newjobs/newjobs.html>.

Fact Sheet

The Foreign Agricultural Service's Career Internship Program

The USDA's Foreign Agricultural Service (FAS) Career Intern Program (CIP) is designed to prepare exceptional men and women who have professional experiences in agriculture and/or business, a college degree, and competencies for careers in public service with FAS. Interns will participate in a two-year program that is designed to fine-tune their skills and abilities. FAS hires full time employees for marketing specialist, international specialist and agricultural economist positions through the CIP.

The two-year internship provides the career candidate an opportunity to learn about the agency as they work in up to four different areas in the Washington, DC offices of FAS: Commodity and Marketing Programs, Export Credits, International Trade Policy and International Cooperation Division. On-the-job and formal training is provided based on the intern's and agency's needs.

Career Internship Program, cont.

In addition, the internship gives the intern time to consider a career in FAS's Civil Service or Foreign Service.

Who Can Apply?

Candidates must have a bachelor, master's or PhD degree with a final GPA of 3.00 and must be a U.S. Citizen.

How Does One Apply?

Candidates must submit a completed application package to the Foreign Agricultural Service. For more details:

<http://www.fas.usda.gov/admin/newjobs/newjobs.html>.

Applications will be evaluated four times per year. The application deadlines are September 15 and June 15.

Qualifications

Candidates must have strong leadership, teamwork, cultural and communication skills. Knowledge of Windows software applications and the Internet is required. Candidates must be able to travel domestically and/or abroad. The initial starting salary of the position is based on the candidate's level of education, GPA, and relevant work experience. Candidates for agricultural and international economist positions are required to have 21 hours of economics and 3 credit hours of calculus, accounting or statistics.

Benefits

Most U.S. Government employee benefits, including vacation and sick leave, health insurance, life insurance, Federal Employees Retirement System, investment and savings plan, promotion, flexible work hours, family leave, and family friendly programs. Also, on-the-job and formal training is provided, based on the intern's and agency's needs.

For more information

Please visit our website at:

<http://www.fas.usda.gov/admin/newjobs/newjobs.html>.